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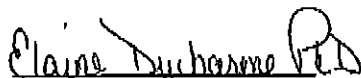
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Judiciary Committee

I am a Licensed Clinical Psychologist who has spent close to 30 years working with victims of crimes. These individuals often find the criminal justice system to be daunting. Already overwhelmed by the criminal act, they often feel revictimized as they struggle to get through court proceedings. It has become clear, that while our judicial system is composed of many wonderful, compassionate and well trained individuals, there remain far too many instances where victims remain unprotected. In order to provide appropriate non biased services to victims, it is clear that the OVA must remain an independent body. Only by remaining independent of other state agencies will they be free to identify systemic issues and improve identified problems.

I also believe that including a number of individuals, who have been victimized by crimes, on the Board of the OVA would greatly increase its ability to be effective. Only these victims can provide a true perspective of the services being offered. Their input is unique and invaluable.

The name Office of the Victim Advocate is often confusing. Many individuals believe that the OVA and the Office of Victim Services in the Judicial Branch are one in the same. I believe changing the name of the OVA to the proposed name of Office for Crime Victim's Rights eliminates this confusion and more clearly indicates the true function of the OVA.



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